

**EQUALITY AND**

 **DIVERSITY POLICY**

**Adopted: February 2018**

**Reviewed: Jan 2025**

**Next Review: Jan 2026**

**Reg Charity No 1128565**

**Equality and Diversity Policy**

1. **Introduction**
	1. Age UK North Cumbria recognises that discrimination and victimisation is unacceptable in any situation.
	2. It is therefore the aim of the Organisation that no Employee/Trustee/Volunteer/Client/ or any other individual involved in the Organisation receives less favorable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) on the grounds of age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. For the remainder of the Policy these will be referred to as “**protected characteristics**”.
	3. This Policy applies to all Age UK North Cumbria activities and is adopted by Employees, Trustees, Volunteers, Clients, and any other Individual involved with the Organisation.
	4. Age UK North Cumbria will adhere to the principles and procedures contained within UK legislation and appropriate guidance. Taking the following particularly into consideration:
* The Equality Act 2010
* The Human Rights Act 1998
* The Mental Capacity Act 2005
* The Accessible Information Standard (AIS)
* The Equality and Human Rights Commission

**2. Purpose**

2.1 As a leading Organisation within the third sector locally, Age UK Carlisle and

 Eden recognise that we have a vital role to play in upholding equality and

 diversity. Opposing all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination or

 victimisation. To that end the overall purpose of this Policy is to ensure we

 are providing fairness for all.

 2.2 To ensure all Employees/ Volunteers/ Trustees and any other Individuals

 involved with the Organisation, are treated fairly and with respect by others.

 2.3 All Employees/ Volunteers/ Trustees and any other Individuals

 involved with the Organisation are encouraged to develop to their full potential,

 ensuring all talents and resources of the workforce are fully utilised

 to maximise the efficiency of the Organisation.

 2.4 To ensure our Employees/ Volunteers/ Trustees/ and any other individuals

 involved with the Organisation do not discriminate others directly or indirectly,

 because of any protected characteristics discussed above in the provision of the

 Organisation’s goods and services.

1. **Principles**
	1. Age UK North Cumbria recognises that every person is an individual with different needs, preferences, and abilities. We value difference and welcome diversity - both in our workforce and in our services. This is not only good management practice but makes sound business sense.
	2. The following principles will therefore be adhered to -
* We believe our workforce should be truly representative of all sections of society and therefore recruitment and selection practices will be monitored in line with this.
* Each Employee/ Trustee/ Volunteer or any other Individual involved with the Organsiation feels respected, has equal training, development, and progression opportunities, ensuring they can achieve and give their best. Overall, it is recognised that it is in the interests of the Organisation, its Employees/Trustees/ Volunteers and Clients to utilise the skills of the entire workforce.
* To maintain a culture in which individual differences and the contributions of all are recognised and valued.
* Every Employee/ Volunteer/ Trustee/ and any other individual

involved with the Organisation is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.

* The human rights of all individuals connected with Age UK North Cumbria will be upheld.
* Equality and diversity are integrated into training and development, as part of induction processes, team meetings, and supervision.
* Our services meet the needs of older people in Carlisle and Eden. This includes monitoring the effectiveness of reaching all communities and taking action to address any areas in which we are failing to do so.
* Make any appropriate reasonable adjustments, within our financial resources to ensure activities and services offered are accessible, including information being available in different formats or making use of outreach opportunities.
* The importance of supporting people holistically is intrinsic to the Organisation. Therefore, wherever possible we will endeavor to source all appropriate support to meet individual needs, sometimes this may involve engaging with external Organisations. Due diligence will be undertaken to ensure they share the same equality and diversity views.
* Challenge any practices and/or Organisation that deny the rights of individuals or groups experiencing discrimination, whether intentional or not.
* Breaches of this Policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
1. **Responsibilities**

4.1 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has overall responsibility for ensuring the

 effective implementation of Age UK North Cumbria’s Equality and Diversity

 Policy and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid

 discrimination. this is supported on a day-to-day basis by all Employees,

 Trustees, Volunteers, and any other Individual involved with the Organisation

 adopting and endorsing these.

* 1. Trustees/ Employees / Volunteers/ Other Individuals involved in the Organisation
		1. Responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with all Trustees/ Employees / Volunteers/ Other Individuals involved in the Organisation and their attitudes are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices. should:
* Comply with the Policy and arrangements.
* Not discriminate in their day-to-day activities or induce others to do so.
* Not victimise, harass, or intimidate others or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics.
* Ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
* Make any appropriate reasonable adjustments, within our financial resources to ensure activities and services offered are accessible.
* Seek support for Client’s from Organisations with similar equality and diversity views.
* Appropriately challenge (with Line Manager Support) any practices and/or Organisations that deny the rights of individuals or appear discriminatory, whether intentional or not.
* Inform their Line Manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.
	1. Line Managers and Chief Executive Officer
		1. The senior management team, including the CEO will ensure that they and the Trustees/ Employees/ Volunteers and any other Individual involved with the Organisation operate within this Policy and arrangements, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination. Each Line Manager and the CEO will ensure that:
* Also follow Employee/Volunteer responsibilities
* Inform the Chief Executive Officer/ Trustees if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.
* Ensure their Employees/ Volunteers are aware of the Policy and the reasons for the Policy.
* Ensure Equality and Diversity is embedded within training and induction processes.
* Ensure services/activities are monitored in terms of accessibility and where required action is taken to resolve any issues raised.
* Grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly, and as quickly as possible. Seeking appropriate assistance from external HR consultants.
* Proper records are maintained throughout.
* Make reasonable adjustments within financial resources to maintain the services of an Employee/Volunteer who becomes disabled, for example, training, and provision of special equipment, reduced working hours. (NB: Line Managers are expected to seek advice and guidance from external agencies where appropriate to maintain disabled people in employment).
* include disabled people in training/development programs.
* Give full and proper consideration to disabled people who apply for jobs, having regard to making reasonable adjustments for their aptitudes and abilities to allow them to be able to do undertake the role.

**5. Action to be taken**

 5.1 Trustees/ Employees/ Volunteers and any other Individual involved with the

 Organsiation have a right to pursue a complaint concerning discrimination or

 victimisation, via the Organisation’s Grievance or Harassment and Bullying

 Procedures.

 5.2 Any forms of Discrimination and/or victimisation by an Employee will be

 treated as a Disciplinary offence, and dealt with under the Organisation’s

 Disciplinary Procedure.

 5.3 Third-party harassment occurs when an Age UK North Cumbria Trustee/

 Employee/ Volunteer or any other Individual involved with the

 Organsiation is facing harassment related to a protected characteristic, by

 third parties, such as Clients, a member of the Clients Network or a Customer.

 Age UK North Cumbria will not tolerate such actions, and episodes of this

 should be reported to a Line Manager immediately. The Organisation will fully

 investigate and take all reasonable steps to ensure such harassment does not

 happen again. This may include making a report to the police and/or

 withdrawing access to services.

**6. Monitoring and Review**

6.1 The implementation and effectiveness of this Policy will be monitored, reviewed

 (no less than annually) and updated to remain compliant with current

 Legislation and guidance by the CEO and any identified discriminatory

 elements will be removed.